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Formation of Balanced Bilingualism of Professional Translators

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Abstract

The article deals with the issues of translators' bilingualism, its formation in the process of professional translators' training as well as the aspects of translation equivalents and switching between languages. A special complex of pretranslating exercises has been worked out and the effect of its implementation has been analyzed. New problems for investigation have been distinguished.

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1. Introduction

The main and final objective of a translator's to-be professional training is to form the so-called "balanced translation bilingualism". This notion is viewed upon as a complex, systemic and intrapersonal form that involves developing a particular new language (semiotic) system, which a translator is able to use while communicating. Apart from this communicative aspect that incorporates situational meanings and implications, the notion can also be associated with some wider common cultural concepts and world's mental representations that constitute its sociocultural and linguocultural aspects (Min'yar-Beloruichev, 1974, 1994; Zimnyaya, 1978, 1981; Khaleeva, 1989; Komissarov, 2002; and others).

The notion of bilingualism does not necessarily imply that a translator is fluent in both languages because it is believed that a person tends to acquire languages in a varying degree due to the different social scopes of languages

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and cultures represented by them. Hence, a balanced bilingualism denotes a translator's near-native fluency in one language that does not hinder the use of the other. The language a person is more fluent in is called a dominant language which is not necessarily his or her first language.

Not all bilinguals can be translators; most of them being fluent in both languages are completely unable to translate. A translator's bilingualism can be defined as parallel, coordinative, active and communicative balanced bilingualism (Serova, 2010, p. 45). A translator's bilingualism means that a professional is not only proficient in two languages but, first and foremost, is able to find and correlate communicatively equal means of these languages in order to express ideas with a glance to special characteristics of a certain act of communication (Komissarov, 2002, p. 80). This communicative competence of a bilingual translator is described as contrastive and dynamic because it often entails an introduction of missing background information into a translated utterance itself or reference to it in footnotes. A translator's bilingualism is different from that of a non-translator due to the highly formed automatisms of interlingual substitutions that helps the translator switch between languages (Zimnyaya, 1981). And if bilingualism is a must for a translator's work, then it is revealed in the ability to use two languages in communication constantly, contactually and parallelly to perform verbal tasks using two languages (Min'yar-Beloruchev, 1994, p. 51).

Thus, a translator's training should aim to enable him or her develop such system of language equivalents in the mind that relies on the differentiation and understanding of the world images of both social and cultural communities (Khaleeva, 1989, p. 66-67).

1.1. The linguistic world image

The formation of a linguistic world image as it is represented by another culture infers a complex of sensual and mental images in the mind of a bilingual to-be viewed as the highest level of psychic reflection of reality (Leont'ev, 1983). Psychic sensual images are naturally figural and they are produced during activity. They are the most important components of human consciousness, which are characterized by an acquired significance and meaning resulting from the perception of the world (Leont'ev, 1983, p. 172-174).

In this regard, it is crucial to observe not only linguistic consciousness constituting the core of the linguistic world image but also a cognitive or thesaurus level of a linguistic identity, i.e. cognitive consciousness (Khaleeva, 1989) and certainly an emotive consciousness. This is due to the fact that forming a bilingual presupposes acquisition of not only the linguistic context of the word but also its emotive and cognitive contexts. According to Leont'ev (1983), the inner movement of individual consciousness is generated by the movement of human's substantive work, that is why linguistic consciousness as well as cognitive and emotive consciousness can be developed by a translator in the course of constant active foreign speech production in the context of communication with surrounding people. While forming bilingualism it is important to consider that an authentic text presenting another foreign community is the way to reflect the linguistic world image and the bearer of the world knowledge. That is why skills and abilities of foreign oral and written "reception have to be developed by means of classes of oral (sounded) and written (printed) texts typologized for didactic purposes" (Khaleeva, 1989, p. 57), which present the conceptual system as the world image of another linguistic community. That is exactly how to solve one of the most essential tasks of translators' professional training which is to create equivalent images of mental models of reality fragments provided in texts by means of corresponding numerous contexts in the consciousness of trainees (Leont'ev, 1983; Khaleeva, 1989, and others).

Interrelated functioning in foreign speech production of linguistic and cognitive consciousness makes it possible to speak about "bicognitive thinking" (Khaleeva, 1989), when the establishment of key autosemantic words, denotations expressing the fragments of objective reality, inferences and judgements takes place in the form of information units of authentic texts. In this respect the choice of specially organized exercises in reading and listening is becoming an important aspect of bilingualism formation.

1.2. Balanced translator's bilingualism

A bilingual uses both languages in order to accomplish one and the same conceptual categories of tense, place, quality, modality and others, to specify classes of objects, certain objects and their attributes, processes and states,

which are connected with the unity of human reasoning and the outside world, although the way every language is used for speech puts forward the necessity to consider the peculiarity of linguistic units' semantics:

- dissimilarity of units' meanings, e.g. "рука" – "hand", "arm";
- dissimilarity of "the world images", different segmentation of reality;
- differences of extralinguistic reality, e.g. the set expression in Russian "третьим будешь?" (Will you be the third one?).

All of them are connected with the national character of cultures which is embodied in the language and is based on special outlook. Language and culture are connected by means of the meaning of linguistic signs because "the development of culture itself could not take place until the language had been formed – the instrument of meaning expression» (Sapir, 1993, p. 42). Cultural information is "scattered" in the language of texts and it is reproduced by native speakers (Teliya, 1996, p. 14), in other words, linguistic signs have cultural semantics because the world of meanings reflects human culture. To understand a language means to use only those combinations and transformations which are accepted in the given social group, to define objects and situations the way the members of this group do, to express your own states the way the others do it.

The balanced translator's bilingualism is determined by the degree of formation of translation equivalents on lexical, phraseological and grammatical language levels (Komissarov, 2002, p. 167). The translation equivalent is a unit of the target language which is regularly used to translate the same unit of the source language. As a rule, translation equivalents are set between the units of the same level (Serova, 2010, p. 167). In addition, it is vital to consider that equivalents can be singular and plural on any level, but especially on the lexical one. Terms, proper names, geographical and other names have singular equivalents; this is when one or another unit of the source language is translated by one and the same unit of the target language. Most units of the source language have plural equivalents; this is when some units of the target language are used to communicate their meanings, which can be determined by verbal context, linguocultural context, or situational context, discourse, especially in case of interpretation.

2. Method of balanced translator's bilingualism formation

2.1. General positions of a teaching model

Thus, if an interpreter manages to gather translation equivalents as a result of constant bilingual speech activities within context and situation, which determine the development level of his or her translation bilingualism, then he or she can switch between languages right at the moment an interpreter is presented with some information. In this case the mechanism of switching from language to language while translating is formed. This mechanism acquires special prominence in conditions of a dialogue between languages and cultures. This mechanism of switching between languages in the process of translation leads to overlapping of the two semantic fields: those of the source and the target language. The issue of actualization and recording of equivalents in the target language is becoming important.

It can be supposed that if translator's bilingualism has been formed, the switch will occur during listening, apprehension and understanding of information and its fixation as key target language units in endophasy. (Zimnyaya, 1978). The actualization of all kinds of lexical and necessary grammatical equivalents occurs at the last stage. Consequently, interpretation begins with listening to the source text, which is based on the inner method of reconstitution of the idea formed and enunciated by a speaker by means of the source language. The secondary formation and formulation of the idea understood and accepted by the translator happens during oral translation. It correlates with the opinion that the program of notional complexes is realized by means of inner speech "as a mechanism of notional integration" (Sokolov, 1967, p. 99). The translator unites word combinations according to certain notional links on the basis of which a notional program of target text is created.

The transition to the oral method of translating by means of a full switch from the source language to the target language materializes in the form of oral utterance as the result of translator's speaking (Serova, 2001). The

formation of a translator's bilingualism is determined by the necessity to solve some didactical problems in the process of interpreter's special professional training starting from the first year of his or her study:

- A very complicated and major didactical problem is inclusion of constant bilingual speech activities regarded as the means of accumulation of translation equivalents first of all on the lexical level as the object of study.
- It is important for translators to-be to deal with methodological task of gathering information about the meanings of language units compulsorily under the condition of the dialogue of languages and cultures, taking into consideration the fact that every source language unit and target language unit has a system meaning which is taken from dictionaries and contextual meaning which derives from the process of its use in speech. In this regard it is necessary to include simultaneously monolingual and defining dictionaries of the source and target languages and contexts on the subject and the problem of a corresponding field of knowledge in both languages while meeting the authenticity requirements.
- Great importance is attached to different methods of grouping lexical units on various grounds but compulsorily in both languages in light of the dialogue of languages and cultures. Such methods are lexical-semantic fields, complexes, lexical and notional entries, topic groups, groups of lexical units with their valent co-occurrence, semantic groups of single-rooted words and word combinations, at the heart of which there can be different kinds of word bindings: syntagmatic, paradigmatic bindings, functional and semantic (quality, space, time and others) word relations, etc., but compulsorily on the level of both languages.

The problem of developing and creating bilingual dictionaries-thesaurus is receiving didactical significance (Serova, 2008; Serova, & Shishkina, 2009). There are four parts:

- logical and semantic structures of topics of a certain field of knowledge where all paradigmatic bindings of key lexical units are presented;
- definitions of key notions on the topic where key units are provided in contexts in the source and target languages;
- lexical and notional entries of key lexical units where the key word is presented not only by paradigmatic but also syntagmatic bindings with other words;
- bilingual alphabetical list of lexical units with their system meanings, e.g. Umweltmanagement – ecological management; management of environmental protection.

The objective to accumulate contextual equivalents in both languages entails studying them in the fifth part of such dictionary, that includes fragments of recorded and printed authentic texts where concrete linguistic units in the source and target languages are provided.

2.2. The role of exercises in teaching translators

It is essential to highlight the significance of exercises designed for training future interpreters aiming at formation of translation bilingualism and underlying mechanism of switch between languages. These exercises should have the following characteristics:

- they should involve interconnected listening to the source text and written fixation of topic, as well as notional development of the content in every exercise in the course of such disciplines as practical course of a foreign language, practical work on the culture of conversation and practical work on consecutive interpretation;

- they should involve speaking activities aimed to use the target language backed by written notes on the topic or notional development of the content as the program of target text production;
- they should include referential reading in the first two cases accompanied by listening or speaking, i.e. reading of the fragments of printed text of presentations focusing on key words and word combinations;
- interrelated use of all kinds of speech activities, namely listening, writing, reading, speaking, accompanying actualization of the situation of complete consecutive interpretation within speech activity unit;
- oral speech practice within the dialogue of both languages with compulsory combination of listening to foreign language and speaking Russian and vice versa - listening to Russian and speaking foreign language on the basis of constantly offered language means correspondence as an informational basis of oral speech practice for all kinds of oral speech activity.

3. Conclusion

Thus, having analyzed the problem of professional translators teaching we highlighted the significance of the educational process organization taking into consideration a bilingualism formation as a basis for the increase of the process efficiency. For this purpose a teaching model with a complex of appropriate exercises was developed. The implementation of this model is supposed to promote special skills development in the course of translators teaching.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the above mentioned theoretical aspects and specificity of exercises do not exhaust all problems and methodical issues related to the formation of translation bilingualism. Other problems demanding special research are, e.g., authentic discourse in situations of consecutive interpretation, activity and correlation of mechanisms of mentality, memory and verbal perception in formation of balanced parallel, coordinative, active and contact interpreter's bilingualism, mechanism of switch from the source to target language in different kinds of translation, place and functions of bilingual dictionaries.

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